

PRESS CLUB HAS TWO INDICTED FOR FRAUD

Pseudo Agents Got Money From

Wealthy Men as Membership Fee.

WARRANTS ARE ISSUED

Police Seek "J. B. Auchincloss,"

Who Induced Standard Oil Man to Give Check.

The New York Press Club announced yesterday that its name is being used improperly by agents seeking money for the club itself or for the Vaudeville Comedy Club, with which it recently became affiliated.

Men representing themselves as hired by the Press Club have obtained money from lawyers, Standard Oil men and others for associate membership in the organization. Such money never reached the club and as a result of a Grand Jury investigation two indictments were handed down last week and detectives with warrants are searching the city for the men.

Complaints have reached the Press Club officials and also THE SUN concerning the methods of agents who under contract with the Vaudeville Comedy Club of 107 West Forty-fourth street have been trying to induce men to become associate members of that organization. The solicitors, it is said, have explained not only that the Press Club is affiliated with the Comedy Club but have sought to impress on the prospective members that certain advantages would accrue to them by having such a connection with the Press Club.

May Sever Relations.

Reports of the activities of the agents of the Comedy Club—there were five of them—reached Edward Percy Howard, chairman of the board of trustees of the Press Club, a few days ago. He had an interview of Francis Morley, secretary of the Comedy Club, and by order of the club he has threatened to sever relations with the upstart organization. Agents of the Comedy Club, for whom a list of prominent men, including lawyers and theatrical men, was compiled, approached Gordon Mills Reid, editor of the New York Tribune. A theatrical manager who was asked to give money for the club's support.

The Vaudeville Comedy Club is composed of vaudeville performers. Among its officers are Gene Hughes, president; Al Johnson, first vice-president; George Le Maire, second vice-president, and Thomas J. Gray, third vice-president. Its board of control includes Felix Adler, E. F. Albee, James M. Brennan, Ralph Edwards, N. E. Maunwaring and Henry Vogel.

The leading members of the club have been carrying on a vigorous campaign to strengthen their organization. They felt it would be of advantage to themselves to have a downtown clubhouse such as the Press Club affords and the members of the Press Club have been unable to use the clubhouse uptown.

The officers of the Vaudeville Comedy Club are planning to move to a larger building and eventually to build a clubhouse. With this object in view they have hired a group of solicitors to get associate members on a percentage basis. These agents have been asking \$100 for four years of associate membership. The yearly dues are \$25 and the initiation fee is \$25. The initiation fee, however, is waived when a prospective member pays \$100 cash. The agent gets a commission of 25 per cent. The remainder of the money, it is explained, goes into what is called "the building fund."

Use Name of Press Club.

One theatrical manager explained that the agents of the Vaudeville Comedy Club were not making clear the object in collecting the money and in their solicitation they were very emphatic in their statements concerning the vaudeville club's connection with the Press Club.

When Mr. Morley, secretary of the Vaudeville Comedy Club, was asked yesterday concerning the affair, he said frankly that agents were in the field among associate members.

"We had five men working, including Louis A. Jackson, who has the matter in charge," he explained. "We have been trying to get associate members. They would put up \$100 cash and we planned to use the money in putting up a new clubhouse. The board of control gave

the solicitors special instructions to discuss only the merits of our club and to do nothing that was questionable. Mr. Howard, on behalf of the Press Club, visited me yesterday and told me of rumors he had heard. I said an investigation would be made and that if necessary hereafter the agents would be instructed not even to say that the Vaudeville Comedy Club was affiliated with the Press Club.

"The board of control individually took up the matter and after an investigation one of the agents of whom we were not quite sure was let go. None of us intended that any special stress should be laid on our connection with the Press Club and no evidence has been produced to show that the agents have done anything wrong. The request from the Press Club to discontinue our campaign will be considered by the board of control."

Standard Oil Man a Victim.

The men representing themselves as solicitors employed by the Press Club have been at work off and on for several months. Two instances of their work have been laid before the Grand Jury. A man giving the name of J. B. Auchincloss has been calling on people in the Wall Street district. In one case G. B. Gifford, manager of the Bayonne works of the Standard Oil Company, gave him a check in payment for special membership in the Press Club. His check was cashed, but the money never reached the club treasury.

R. C. Velt of 26 Broadway, an old time Standard Oil man, and John E. Parsons, counsel for the American Sugar Refining Company, sent their checks direct to the Press Club after they had been approached by the pseudo agent of the organization. James M. Gifford of Gifford, Hobbs & Beard gave his check. An indictment was obtained on the information furnished by Mr. Gifford.

Mr. Velt told the officers of the Press Club he was called on the telephone, ostensibly by a member of the club whom he knew personally, and asked to grant an interview to another member of the club "on a matter of special interest."

Mr. Velt named an hour and a man who gave his name as J. B. Auchincloss appeared. Mr. Velt expressed his willingness to become a special member of the Press Club, but, being busy, asked his caller to come back the next day for the check. Mr. Velt later instructed his secretary to draw his check for the amount and send it to the Press Club, and when "Auchincloss" called the next day he was told that had been done. That was the last seen of the man in Mr. Velt's office.

Get Check by Waiting.

Further investigation showed that Mr. Velt had been influenced largely in promising his check by the assertion that G. B. Gifford had already become a special member. Mr. Gifford obtained from his bank the cancelled check he had given. In this case "Auchincloss" had managed to outwit Mr. Gifford's patience by sitting around until Mr. Gifford found time to draw the check and hand it to "Auchincloss" in person. This check, like that of Mr. Velt's, which was drawn to the order of the New York Press Club, was drawn in the name of Eduardo J. Kenney, named by "Auchincloss" as secretary.

The Press Club received last summer a check for \$100 from John E. Parsons, which on investigation proved to be the fruit of crooked work. The basic check came to the club out of a clear sky, and Mr. Parsons in answer to inquiries said he had been asked to contribute to a fund for the purchase, equipment and maintenance of a vaudeville club. The fund was overworked newspaper men. The check was returned to Mr. Parsons forthwith.

Edward Percy Howard, chairman of the board of trustees, made the following statement last night:

"The New York Press Club is not conducting any campaign or solicitation for special or associate members and no person is authorized to make any such solicitations in the name of the Press Club. The board of trustees will regard it as a favor if prompt information of any such solicitation is sent to the club so that the case may be put in the hands of the District Attorney. Information may be sent to the clubhouse, 21 Spruce street. Telephone, 3505 Beekman."

WOMAN STUDENT WINS A TRIP.

Miss Kellogg Will Study Penal Methods in Europe.

PHILADELPHIA, March 15.—Miss Annie Lillian Kellogg, who is pursuing fellowship studies in Bryn Mawr College, won the European Fellowship offered by the Association of Collegiate Alumnae it was announced today. She spends her vacations visiting prisons and reformatories to gain knowledge at first hand.

Miss Kellogg will be a candidate for the degree of doctor of philosophy in the spring and is now preparing her thesis on "The Theory of Punishment." She worked in the Bedford Hills reformatory for a year in New York last summer, who

Foreign correctional and penal methods will be studied by Miss Kellogg while abroad.

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Prospective Visitors to the New Midland Adelphi are invited to write for a presentation copy of "The History of a Great Enterprise"—a handsome souvenir containing a concise history of Liverpool with reproduction of old and valuable prints depicting the City from the 17th Century onwards together with comprehensive maps and illustrated route guides for motorists to all historical and picturesque centres within easy access: a full description of the Hotel illustrated in colour. Although published at Five Shillings this handsome volume can be obtained free by intending visitors on forwarding a visiting card to International Sleeping Car Co. (Dorland Travel Service), 201, Fifth Avenue, New York.

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LOST, FOUND AND REWARDS.

LOST—Pacific Mail Steamship Company Stock Certificate No. A38355 for twenty shares in the name of "Logan & Bryan" is hereby given to show cause why a duplicate should not be issued. JOHN HURLEY, Upper Lehigh, Pa.

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FORECLOSURE SALES.

SUPREME COURT, COUNTY OF NEW YORK. In re: ESTATE OF JAMES H. LEVY, Plaintiff, against ESTATE OF JAMES H. LEVY, Defendant. In pursuance of an order of the Supreme Court, County of New York, made on the 11th day of February, 1914, the undersigned, the referee in said judgment named, will sell at public auction at the New York Hotel, 123 West 44th Street, in the Borough of Manhattan, City of New York, on the 11th day of March, 1914, at twelve o'clock noon on that day, the premises described in said judgment and entered in the above entitled action, bearing date the 11th day of February, 1914, to-wit: the undersigned, the referee in said judgment named, will sell at public auction at the New York Hotel, 123 West 44th Street, in the Borough of Manhattan, City of New York, on the 11th day of March, 1914, at twelve o'clock noon on that day, the premises described in said judgment and entered in the above entitled action, bearing date the 11th day of February, 1914, to-wit: the undersigned, the referee in said judgment named, will sell at public auction at the New York Hotel, 123 West 44th Street, in the Borough 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